

# **We remember the Martyrs of Simele massacre in august 1933 in Iraq**

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Today we remember one of the darkest moments in the history of humanity. At this day, hundreds of innocent Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian (CSA) civilian people had been killed and massacred under the rule of newly established Kingdom of Iraq. The Simele Massacre took place in August 1933 in Iraq against Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian people.

Following the Iraqi independence and establishment of the whole political, social and economic system in the Iraq, the Simele Massacre had been committed against Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian people in the Northern Iraq with the sole objective of ethnic cleansing. In August 1933 Iraqi forces massacred civilians in Simele and at the villages of Dohuk and Mosul. According to different sources around 3000 civilians had been killed and residential areas had been destroyed. During the massacre man, women, children and elders had been victim without any distinction. The remnants of 1915

Sayfo Genocide under Ottoman-Turkish rule had been once again object of genocide. To note, well known lawyer Raphael Lemkin had been inspired from these two events in order to coin the term of “genocide”.

Chaldean-Syriac-Assyrian people are indigenous people of the Middle East. CSA people are not a folk who settled in the Middle East and Mesopotamia by wave of migration or as invaders. They are autochthones in the Levant and they conserved their presence during centuries despite all difficulties. They are the most ancient and deeply rooted people among the Middle Eastern nations. During the centuries CSA people have been present in different parts of Mesopotamia and in the Middle East. CSA people suffered from all hegemonic powers which have controlled the Middle East.

Following the chute of Saddam regime in 2003, CSA people had been target of attacks, killings and kidnappings. Hundreds of civilians had been killed, churches had been attacked and bombed, religious leaders and well known personalities had been abducted and killed. The forced exodus of CSA people diminished their presence in their homeland. In Iraq, we are still witnessing the attempts of demographical changes from different powers. The presence of CSA people in Iraq and more broadly in Middle East region is fundamental. CSA people had been key factor at the establishment of social, cultural and educational structures and they are very important element of social fabric. Granting the fundamental rights and preserving the identity of CSA people is vital for future generations.

We believe that Iraqi authorities and government have to enshrine the Simele Massacre in the Iraqi Constitution and make necessary arrangements and efforts in order to commemorate this painful and tragic event which hit CSA people. Iraqi authorities, regional actors and international community have the moral obligation to follow closely the situation of and support minorities and vulnerable groups in the Middle East region during the current transitional process.

